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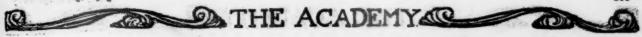
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Registered as a Newspaper in the United Kingdom, and at the New York Post Office as Second-class Mail Matter,

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LIFE AND LETTERS.



IY

L

HE hysterical outburst which followed the execution of Miss Edith Cavell is one among many signs of the flabbiness of certain people's minds. The sentence on

Miss Cavell was a brutal sentence, and the manner in which it was carried out appears to have been brutal beyond words. But that England should be kept rocking on its base, as it were, for a whole fortnight over such a tragedy is, in our opinion, to be deplored; and probably nobody would have been more startled or distressed by the public attitude in the matter than Miss Cavell herself, who, when all is said, died not in the spirit of sentimental patriotism but because she was a firm woman and insisted on the stiff upper lip. We ought not to forget that this unfortunate lady virtually brought about not only her own condemnation but that of eight other persons for the sake of a scruple—that is to say she declined to keep her mouth shut and persisted in telling all she knew. We have it on the authority of Mr. Brand Whitlock that pretty well the whole of the evidence upon which she was convicted was volunteered by herself, and that she "implicated eight other persons by her testimony." There it is in black and white, and if opinions do not differ as to the general wisdom of Miss Cavell's conduct that is because we are prone to allow gush and considerations of easy gallantry to override more serious issues. The shoutings and heroics of a sprawling Press have done us no good

with neutral countries; and they are simply wasted on the Germans, who, if they take any note of them at all, credit them to us for weakness. We shall have to learn that the death of an Englishwoman for the sake of England is not an affair that should send the Premier to St. Paul's. "Who dies, if England lives?" will always be as much the concern of Engishwomen as of Englishmen, and the fact that one of them rises to the occasions of the spirit in the face of death should neither surprise, astonish nor unbalance us.

The man who goes short of congratulations on his appointment to place and power must, of course, be in a parlous way, and the promotion of Sir F. E. Smith from the trenches and the Censorship to the position of Attorney-General has naturally brought him floods of good wishes from all sorts and conditions of persons. One of these persons addresses to F.E. an open letter from which we take the following:—

In less than twenty years from your entry upon a legal career you have forged your way to the head of the English Bar, with office as Attorney-General and a seat in the Cabinet. So modestly withal do you bear your honours that in your wide circle of acquaintance there is not a man who will grudge you the reward of your sterling talents.

We wonder if, say, Sir Edward Carson or plain Mr. Duke would agree that Sir F. E. Smith has ever been the head of the English Bar, and as for grudging him the reward of his sterling talents it is certain that nobody will grudge him the reward they deserve. And the modesty of Sir F. E. Smith on taking a seat in the Cabinet can be well understood.

A few days before publication we received from Messrs. Sampson Low a copy of Mr. Jeffery Farnol's "two hundred thousand word" novel, Beltane the Smith, and the other day Messrs. Sampson Low sent us a postcard on which they informed us that they had not seen our notice of the book, and asked us to send them a copy of the issue containing it. Why Messrs. Sampson Low should thus honour us we are at a loss to understand, and we may as well state for the benefit of all whom it may concern that the ACADEMY notices books at its own discretion, and is neither to be hurried up nor nailed down by publishers' postcards.

The speeches at the Guildhall Banquet were reported at length and doubtless read. We shall



quote from only one of them, namely, the speech of the Premier, and from that sea of words we shall rescue only the following priceless pearl-

At a somewhat critical moment in the conduct of the war we find a journal which saw fit to invent and circulate a lie. (Loud cheers.) Not only a lie, but a malignant lie. (Cheers.) And not only a malignant lie, but a mischievous lie. (Renewed cheers.)

Now it is plain that the newspaper referred to (commonly known as the Globe) has been guilty of a grave It committed itself to an assertion which has been contradicted by the "highest authority," and it persisted in its assertion after the contradiction; with the result that the "highest authority" very properly "took steps." Obviously the Globe cannot complain, but we think that a great man like Mr. Asquith who, figuratively speaking, stood up at the Guildhall Banquet with the essential parts of the Globe's printing plant in his coat tail pocket, might have been a little more magnanimous in his choice of language. When a Minister, through misinformation, makes a statement in the House of Commons which turns out subsequently to be untrue, it is not customary to accuse him flatly of having invented and circulated a lie-"malignant" or otherwise. Mr. Asquith tells us that on the whole the Press "has known how to combine vigilance and outspokenness with patriotic self-restraint." A trifle of restraint of language when you are dealing with somebody of whom you have clearly got the whip hand is becoming also in a Minister of the Crown. The Guildhall is not the Old Bailey.

Meanwhile, for the advantage of those persons for whom the no-treating order appears to hold all sorts of hidden terrors, we may point out that it is not against the law to provide ample alcoholic refreshment at a public dinner. Before his guests at the Guildhall the Lord Mayor of London set the following list of "wines":-

PUNCH. SHERRY: Gonzalez. SAUTERNE. CHAMPAGNE: Pommery, 1906; Clicquot, 1906. CLARET : Château Margaux, 1893. PORT: Cockburn's, 1896. LIQUEURS.

Not even a "whimperer" could complain of entertainment of this sort. And further, and apart from alcohol, there were Turtle, thick and clear, Fillets of Soles and Mousses of Lobster, Casseroles of Partridge

MINERALS.

and Barons of Beef, Capons Bechamel, Smoked Tongues and Game Pies, not to mention orange jellies, Princess pastry, Maids of Honour, Charlotte Russe and hices. So that on the whole Christmas Day in the workhouse will be nothing to it. The guests included Mr. Clement Shorter.

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Mr. Stanley Paul sends us notice that a work entitled "Best Books" is now in the press. Also that "it is the silent but ever-ready and reliable guide, philosopher and friend of every reader of books." Also that " some of the best minds of the country, including Professors Sidney Webb, C. Anderson Scott, H. J. Fleure, C. Roberts Chapple, and Dr. W. G. McNaught, have co-operated in the selection." It is obvious that the best books and the best minds should go together. Of Mr. Sidney Webb we appear to have heard. Mr. C. Anderson Scott is a Doctor of Divinity and Dunn Professor of the New Testament at the Theological College of the Presbyterian Church of England. Mr. H. J. Fleure for his part is a Professor of Zoology and Lecturer in Geography at the University College of Wales, and Dr. W. G. McNaught (spelt in Who's Who M'Naught) is a Mus. Doc. and Assistant Inspector of Music at the Education Department. Also he was born at Mile End. Of Mr. C. Roberts Chapple the ordinary works of reference say nothing. We do not doubt that the minds of these gentlemen may be reckoned among the best in the country, but they do not appear to us to be minds in which we should care to put our trust for the selection of the best books, unless, of course, it be the best books about Presbyterianism, Zoology, and School Music. As for Mr. Sidney Webb, he appears to be sealed to departments of letters which are concerned with such exciting topics as "The Break-up of the Poor Law," "The Prevention of Destitution," and "Socialism in England." But we have to remember that Sir John Lubbock was a banker.

The Quarterly, which so far from being savage and tartarly, has developed a complacency which might have considerably startled Byron, rushes into print with a cheerful article entitled "The War and the Poets," the author being Mr. Lascelles Abercrombie, who has just published some verses himself. Mr. Abercrombie is at pains to select for us various moving lyrics from the pens of such bellicose writers as Mr. Maurice Hewlett, Mr. Arthur K. Sabin, Mr. Wilfred Gibson and Mr. John Drinkwater. He also mentions Mr. Kipling, Mr. Rupert Brooke, Mr. 3

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Doughty, Mr. Masefield and Herr Lissauer, whose "fiery rhapsody," he says, is " a hymn which we might easily allow to be perhaps as good as poetry essentially insane can be." And by this comment on the far-famed "Hymn of Hate" it seems to us that Mr. Abercrombie reveals what there is of his true inwardness as critic. For Lissauer's hymn is not "insane," but a hard, fierce piece of work which has triumphed in Germany precisely because it has in it what our poets at home so distinctly lack-namely, guts." Lissauer hates, or professes to hate, the English, and makes no bones about getting his passion, real or assumed, into forthright verse. And Mr. Lascelles Abercrombie bids us admire the following from Mr. Arthur K. Sabin: -

The Harvest Moon swings clear above the trees, Which stand with ragged outlines, grey and still: Her glory floods the glimmering landscape till Night's ways grow tremulous with mysteries.

Ah, underneath this Moon, in fields of France,
How many of our old companionship
Snatch hurried rest, with hearts that burn and glow,
Longing to hear the bugles sound Advance,
To seize their weapons with unfaltering grip,
And for old England strike another blow!

Frankly, we don't admire it, and the only thing we can do for it is to respect the last line, because it is proper to respect grey hairs. Dealing with Mr. Gibson, Mr. Abercrombie observes: "He forces us to realise the vast unreason of war by bringing into withering contact with its current a mind still preoccupied with the habits of peace. It may be a soldier drowsing and seeing in a sudden clear-coloured picture

Black lambs that frolic in the snow Among the daffodils, In a far orchard that I know Beneath the Malvern hills.

We do not wish to bring ourselves into withering contact with Mr. Abercrombie, but we say that the verse he quotes is just a valentine verse made up of dubious prettinesses, and a very fine sample of what practice will do for a man when he happens to be short of inspiration. Mr. Gibson's soldier may in his day have seen black lambs frolicking among daffodils in a far orchard beneath the Malverns, but we should like to wager that Mr. Gibson never did.

Last year and this year on St. Crispin's Day the Times quoted the famous lines from Shakespeare's King Henry V., which include of course the following:—

He that shall live this day, and see old age,
Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbours then shall our names
Familiar in his mouth as household words,
Be in their flowing cups freshly remembered.

We have no wish to hurt the feelings of the Times, but in view of the fact that it actively assisted in the passing of the "no treating" order we feel bound to comment upon its inconsistency in not censoring Shakespeare's mention of "flowing cups." The Bard was obviously referring to stronger brew than cocoa, and England, now happily free and sober, is in some danger of being misunderstood by neutral countries if quotations of the kind are permitted in the public prints. And in this connection we observe that, on the motion of the Bishop of Willesden, a resolution was recently adopted at a public meeting "urging the Government to suspend the sale of intoxicating liquor in the United Kingdom during the period of the war and for twelve months afterwards." As there is a good deal of dangerous nonsense in Shakespeare unfitted for an age of progress, we venture to suggest to the worthy Bishop that an expurgated edition of the plays would be welcomed by a nation grateful for all well-meaning attempts to improve it.

ON LOVING ONE ANOTHER.

We forget whether the Daily News and Leader continues to call itself a Liberal newspaper, and in addressing ourselves to a gentle word of criticism for our contemporary we should like to say beforehand that we do not propose to indulge in ribald remarks about cocoa. The Daily News has discovered that since May, 1915, the circulation of a paper called the Daily Mail has dropped from 1,227,504 copies to 1,069,359 copies, and in its issue of November 10th it prints these glad tidings in black type, and alongside in equally black type points out that, whereas in May, 1915, the circulation of the Daily News was 660,032 copies, in October, 1915, the sales had swelled to 850,000 copies. Which, to put it plainly, means that, roughly speaking, the Daily Mail has lost 250,000 circulation, and the Daily News has gained 200,000. The Daily News makes no comment on the matter, but contents itself with the inquiry, "What has happened?" For all that it is obvious that the people in Bouverie Street are very pleased, not only with their own increase of sales, but with the drop in the sales of the at Carmelite House. people Otherwise they would not be so generous with their free advertising of the Daily Mail. At any rate,

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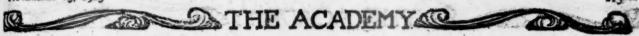
ON THE ACADEMY ACC (6)

we have never known the Editor of the Daily News announce the increases in his contemporary's circulation; and on the whole the milk in the cocoa nut seems rather obvious. With regard to the inquiry as to what has happened, however-an inquiry which the Daily News appears unable to answer for itselfwe desire to say a few brief words. It is common knowledge that the Academy has not at any time counted among the admirers of Lord Northcliffe. We have always held that the Harmsworth journals were journals to be eschewed by persons with minds, and this, not because of any doubtful propaganda in which those journals might be engaged, but simply because, taking them in the lump, they are illiterate and timeserving sheets concerned more with money-making than with public enlightenment, and with the thing that pays rather than with the thing that is vital. But at the same time there can be no doubt that so far as the Daily Mail is concerned, the Harmsworths have created and maintained a newspaper which, from the point of view of journalism, is a newspaper to be reckoned with. Furthermore, from the beginning of the war the Daily Mail has taken a line of its own which, in the main, has proved to be the right line. And what has happened is that for the first time in its career it has experienced some of the rewards which fall to people who insist upon taking a right line. That is to say, it has suffered a certain amount of obloquy, a great deal of abuse, and a falling-off in its circulation. Now we will admit frankly that if we have not loved the Daily Mail we have always loathed the Daily News, and this for the good reason that while the Daily Mail has had the courage of its own commercialism, and never till lately hesitated to turn a honest ha'penny where it could, the Daily News has been continually grubbing after the same ha'pence, and asserting all the while that it wasn't looking for ha'pence, but for the kingdom of heaven. One has only to compare an issue of the Daily News with an issue of the Daily Mail to perceive that in all essential respects the Harmsworth idea of a newspaper has come to be the Daily News idea of a newspaper. The Daily News used to be published at a penny. It is now published at a ha'penny like the Daily Mail. On the leader page of the Daily Mail there is a leading article and then a couple of columns of signed articles precisely as in the Daily Mail. Then comes a column of correspondence as in the Daily Mail. The main news page of the Daily Mail is headed right across with a big line of type; so is the main news page of the Daily

News. The Mail has two pages of smaller news. and so has the Daily News. And the whole of the back page of the Daily Mail is taken up with pictures. and so is the greater part of the back page of the Daily News. It may be, of course (though we should doubt it) that in some respects the Daily Mail is the imitator, but anybody who knows anything about journalism knows that in the large respects it is the Daily News which is the imitator. And if we were asked how the Daily News comes by its increase of circulation, we should say that it has attained to it in exactly the same way as the Daily Mail obtained circulation before the War, namely, by being as Daily-Mailish as possible. We shall go further and assert that, during the War, the Daily News has lent itself to the policy of "keep it dark," and "hush-a-bye," which is popular nowadays among lawyer-politicians and foolish citizens; whereas the Daily Mail has clamoured, and, if you like, howled for the truth at the top of its voice. Which is an unpopular thing to do. So that when the Daily News advertises a decrease of the Daily Mail circulation, and an increase of its own, it is simply advertising the Daily Mail's recent accession to a kind of ultimate grace and its own falling therefrom. That briefly is "what has happened," and the Daily News is welcome to it. There is absolutely nothing the Daily News knows in the way of journalism which it has not learnt from the Harmsworths, and if it goes a step further and learns from the Harmsworths to say its say about the Government and the conduct of the War, plainly and fearlessly, we may be able to offer it a trifle of respect even though its circulation goes back to unexciting pre-war figures. In any case not only the Daily News but the Daily Mail and all other newspapers whatsoever will do well to remember that in war-time their circulations are of no real significance, and that having made their piles out of the public the least they can do is to see to it that they set the public interest first, and let circulation go the devil who spawned it.

WALKING AT NIGHT.

The ancient maker of crab-pots, hastily leaving his seat and simple wooden post beside the heaps of withes as the twilight gathered, gave him a surly goodnight as he set out homewards. The stillness of dusk descended, enfolding the golden points of light in the cottage windows so closely that they seemed almost,



by some sound of colour, to break the silence. The fisherman, who all the afternoon had been cleaning the reddish bream under the bridge, left the flat stone on which he had been crouched and, jerking the last red filaments into the stream, picked up his box and slouched off. The late cattle ambled along the lanes; a grindstone shrilled somewhere in an outhouse.

He stepped out briskly. The embarrassing halflight was upon him as he mounted and crossed the heights above the village, looking back once more at the clustered dwellings, now no more than a greyish smudge in a deep pit of shadow. A farm labourer, looming up over a stile, startled him with an abrupt good-evening.

Far down below he could see the sea, could hear rather, the white curl of the breakers on the rocks there. A syren far out in the in-coming mist lowed like a cow. A faint film of grey streaked the fields.

He passed a farm—another—and with a rapid calculation decided that he could reach the road before the night fell. Once there the way would be clear; of the path he was not altogether sure. . .

To the west a pale green sky hung like a curtain, scalloped at the edge by the distant hills, as if the eager night peeped through there. A single star, pinning it, swung and oscillated, brilliantly unsteady—as if at any moment it might fall and, falling, drench the land with darkness. . . He walked on hurriedly, shifting his eyes here and there; for if he let them rest, the wide landscape seemed to shift and slide, unstable, in the indefinite twilight. The mist deepened on the fields, settling heavily in the hollows. At times he was walking in a sea of it, his head just above its level. . . . He shivered through a billow of it, where it overflowed across his path. His feet were wet and cold. He began to whistle. . . .

Three glimmering stones of a stile brought him unexpectedly into the lane, a dusky ribbon between high, dark hedges, where on the little oak-trees the dry leaves rustled sharply under what he knew was a breeze, though he scarcely felt it. He knew it, too, by a long blackberry shoot which swung up and down against the sky, like an arm waved. His shoes rang out on the stones. . . .

He passed a cottage, fixed to the roadside by a great bar of light from the door, and it broken by the shadow, immense, of a man standing there, whose loud laughter had reached him out of sight. He passed a little round pond shimmering and smoking by

the way; he passed a copse, where the road plunged suddenly (how the gloom sprang at him!) under trees that leaned and whispered, interlocking hands above his head as at a ghostly game of "oranges and lemons"; and as the grotesque thought flashed through his mind he positively ducked and quickened his pace.

The stars glared at him through black upright bars.

Sharp over the jagged line of the hedge, as he came out of the wood, the green sky-curtain receded as the night, like a great Argus-eyed cat, crouching, lapped up the milky field-mist . . . until presently that was gone, clinging only in thin wisps about the damp hollows, when the moon, which had been but a huge yellow drop in the hazy eastern sky, rose out and sailed. Immediately a cold light divided the road, blotting the shadows on one side, on the other stencilling each leaf and twig with the accuracy of a photographic negative. The trees, clumped here and there, were sheeted with solid silver. The last of the day, a just perceptible glow on the hills, went out as the chill light touched it. The dew shone on the grass, on the road, a thousand pin-pricks of tiny light on the thick stuff of his coat and moving stockings. He could see the faint exhalation of his breath, like a halo round him. . . .

There was complete silence. As he stooped and tugged at his loosened shoelace, he was amazed at the completeness of it. There really was no sound: the curious quality of that stillness made but an indication the very faint, very far whisper of the sea, miles away, regular as a sleeper's breath—which only deepened it. It was as if the whole earth slept by the token of that distant throb and surge. No, it was rather as if, under summons of the rising moon, the haunted darkness was quickly robbed of its mystery, as when one clicks on the electric light in a darkened room. The landscape acquired suddenly, it seemed to him, the property of a scene cut out and painted on cardboard, lifeless, immobile. The only living things were the icy moon and the grave twinkling stars which perforated, looking in from some outer world of life, that sullen arch of blue.

Even his own motion did not seem to convey any sense of reality but to himself. He was definitely alone, in face of that unfriendly, painted scene, under those cold incurious stars.

He might, indeed, have been alone in a suddenly petrified world. There was no house in sight. Between vague hills the moor he was crossing stretched out on one side into a sea of dazzling moonlight, on the other crept up to the black trees blotted

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against the hillside. . . . The road was a sheet of palest brown, and at its edge the long grasses about the hidden pools were motionless like blades of steel, the reeds like burnished hatpins, stiff and unbending. Those grass-blades, he thought, looked (so almost white they were) like a forest of tin soldiers' swords, the mist hanging about here and there was shreds of cotton-wool packing, the sky the blue lid of a gigantic box thrown up on end. All a plaything! A round thornbush stood up exactly like one of those coloured leaden things he had seen long ago with toy farmyards; and so strong was the sense of unreality that he would not have been surprised to see an absurdly impossible man of wood, circular stand and all, stuck up like a scarecrow or leaning in the particularly lifeless way of wooden toys, just emerged from the Ark, for which-in the next moment-he had mistaken a barn.

He was so convinced of the lifelessness of it all that the sudden clank of a hobbled horse made him start. The gruesome associations of clanking chains leapt upon him from that dark corner under the hedge. The horribly impersonal moonlight made everything possble—ghosts, headless, bodiless. . . . He tapped with his stick, and with a terrified snort and clank the beast turned somewhere in the shadows and made off up the lane. . . .

He knew perfectly well that it was a horse, but somehow a horse didn't seem right just then; horse or no horse, there was something wrong about it. It was quite as impossible that something really alive could be there as that one of those steel-bladed grasses should be shaken by a wind. He had the same feelings as if a toy horse had suddenly moved of its own accord, sharing the stubborn astonishment of Macbeth when he saw Birnam wood marching against him. So the horse had seemed a very part of the shadows, detaching itself and moving monstrously away. And it was moving. He could hear the hoofs gently tapping along the lane before him. . . .

He pressed on. The road, at a bend, received the moonlight slantwise again, so that half was in swimming shadow into which he could not see. Tap, tap, clank went on in front of him. He caught a glimpse of the Thing now and then as it crossed a gateway, black, enormous, shapeless. It began to have for him a peculiar significance in its halting patter. The vagueness and patience of the creature disconcerted him. He had not even seen it, to fix a definite and reassuring shape to it, when it vanished from that first

corner, leaving only a gap in the darkness a little blacker than before; and these glimpses now showed him no more than a shining flank flashing past these moonlit spaces. It might be a monster of a horse, with fiery eyes and sulphur-slobbered jaw. It might also be something atrociously meagre, with blood-shot eyes and lean, protruding tongue, its ribs starting ghastly from its sides. It was perhaps not an ordinary horse at all, but the embodiment of all that is horselike, a kind of abstract of all creatures which spend their nights hobbled by the roadsides, cropping stealthily in the dark to the terror of passers-by. At all events it was uncanny. He could never catch it up; it never outdistanced him; it did not even disappear. Yes, it would have been far more reasonable that the thick shadows should take it back, silently, as they had given it forth. . . .

And that they presently did, where the road widened a little by a grassy triangle. He was only conscious of it, some minutes after it had happened, by a faint sniff from behind.

And yet that sniff seemed to bring back friendliness into the night. The world was busy again. A trap passed him, swaying, the two men in it, with a woman between them, singing lustily as they drove. A dip in the road swallowed them up, song and all, as if they had never been, and a winking farm window came slowly into sight before him. In the yard a dog barked.

He was near home now-near enough to count the landmarks one by one, the stiff church tower (the white tombstones of the cemetery bobbed over the fields at him); the squat reservoir, gushing like the sea; the grove of trees and the still pond, their mirror; the cross-roads with their sentry signpost; the three stiles, the last by the drowsy farm. And then he climbed the hill, and with a sigh of relief saw the sudden space of the bay spread out like a fan beneath him. Lights dotted the hills on the other side: the wedge-like flick of a lighthouse seemed to snap its fingers at the high moon. And down below, at his feet, very quiet, the town lay, stretching out from the bosoming hills, a delicate neck of land on which the lamps of the parade gleamed like a jewelled necklace where the sea touched it. Under the heedless moon the land lay silent, darkas some woman under those same skies might bend back her throat a little, her head pillowed, for the restless hands of her lover to play with her jewelled beads. . . .

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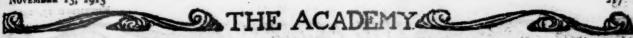
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FULL SHARE. THE

"I take my full share of responsibility for the initiation of that operation-my full share." "I do not propose to adopt the attitude of a white-sheeted penitent, with a couple of candles, one in each hand, doing penance and asking for absolution."-Mr. Asquith.

Do not expect from me (Whom you have set In this authority) Defence, apology, Excuse or plea, Or even a regret: No sheeted penitent Am I, To stand Candle in hand And cry That I may be forgiven, Absolved or shriven, For what is spilt and spent.

All that has happened so Is so. I lay it bare; Admission I make: The wisest of us err, The best plans go awry; Perhaps we blundered sore; But I would have you know No one is more Responsible than I, And of the accountability I take My share—and my full share!

Lord of the Mysteries, Who on the shining air Launchest despair, And black, by rose and vine, Spillest the battle-line; This is the Bread, and this

The perfumed Wine:

No period dost Thou set

II.

In far Gallipoli Where Achi frowns to the sea, And wild war-fires are set; Stark to the Eastern moon, There lies, Huddled in the last agonies, Beside his shattered gun, A new-slain English boy: And his dead eyes Hint not apologies, Excuses or regret, Neither dismay nor joy; No candles at his head Nor sheet nor shroud has he, And by his blood-soaked bed No shriving words are said.

It is a woman's son-The child she bare In England free and fair: Following the English drum Hitherward is he come, So to annul And break Himself for England's sake-He, too, hath taken his share, And taken it in full.

III.

Unto our dole and fret, Which, being of Thee, are Thine. Yet, if we yield our breath To death, Or keep in strife This fripperied, fardel life, Help each of us to bear His share—and his full share! T. W. H CROSLAND.

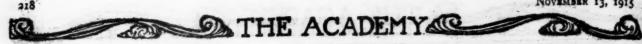
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REVIEWS.

LIONEL JOHNSON AND JAMES OPPENHEIM.

The Poetical Works of Lionel Johnson. (Elkin Mathews.) 75. 6d. net.

Songs for the New Age. By JAMES OPPENHEIM. Richards.) 2s. 6d. net.

We suppose that even amid their elegant preoccupation with the war, people who hail from Oxford will do their best to raise a scream over this edition of Lionel Johnson's collected poems. The volume is notable in two ways. First it contains portraits of Johnson which represent him as a youth, one taken "at Winchester School," and the other at Oxford, "when President of the New College Essay Society." these are the only portraits. A picture of the poet as he lived and moved and had his being in the neighbourhood of Peele's Hotel, Fleet Street, might have jarred on Oxford (the passionate believer in eternal youth), and consequently we must go without our man Johnson. We think it was Mr. Watts-Dunton who started this printing of photographs which do not represent the male person in his prime, but the idiot boy who is the father of the prime. Mr. Watts-Dunton went through life figuring pictorially as a sappy youth with a moustache, and Mr. Watts-Dunton has not been alone in this regard; quite a number of our "poets" and "fictionists" having availed themselves of the tip of the sage of Putney, and persisted in representing themselves as slim Ganymedes rather than adipose and baldish veterans. And in this Lionel Johnson volume, Oxford has been further humoured to the tune of a preface which bears the exciting signature of no less a person than Mr. Ezra Pound, who, of course, is an American, and who, it seems, has no objection to making the fact discreetly known. "In America ten or twelve years ago," he writes, "one read Fiona McLeod and Dowson and Symons. One was guided by Mr. Mosher of Bangor. I think I first hand af by Mr. Mosher, of Bangor. I think I first heard of Johnson in an odd sort of post-graduate course conducted by Dr. Weigandt." This, of course, is the This, of course, is the Oxford manner beautifully put on. If Mr. Pound had an ounce of ginger in him he would have told us flatly that, after all, Lionel Johnson is "some poet;" but he doesn't. He keeps on Oxfordising to the bitter end, and even quotes Parrhasius in the Greek character. Oh, scholar! And Ezra's last words are: "I trust I have not transgressed in reprinting some few of the earlier poems."

Before we deal with Johnson we must say our say about another small matter. Poetry is poetry, even as war is war, and for ourselves we regret extremely that Mr. Pound's regard for Oxford has permitted him to retain the infinity of dedications with which Lionel Johnson, for reasons known to himself, embellished some of his best, and pretty well all of his worst work. When one finds (we hope Mr. Pound will allow us his "one") a poem with the heading "Plato in London," and underneath that heading in bold italic, "To Campbell Dodgson," or "to H. B. Irving," beneath the title "A Friend," or (heaven save us!) "To William Watson"

beneath "By the Statue of King Charles at Charing Cross"; one is pulled up with a sort of jerk which poets have no right to administer to "one." dedications begin at the beginning of the volume, and they go on almost to the end, the persons honoured including Arthur Galton, Ernest Dowson, Ernest Rhys, William B. Yeats, Herbert P. Horne, John McGrath, Charles Furse, Manmohan Ghose, Hugh Orange, Dr. Barry, Harold Child, Theodore Peters, John O'Leary, John Davidson, John O'Mahony, Vincent O'Sullivan, Herbert Trench, Earl Russell, Percy Addleshaw, Stewart Headlam, Charles Mulvaney, Percy Dearmer, Laurence Binyon, James Britten, Victor Plarr, Selwyn Crackanthorpe, Mrs. Hinkson, J. P. Quinn, Selwyn Image, Charles Sayle, John Little, Mrs. Clement Shorter, Mrs. Meynell, More Adey, Roger Fry, and half a hundred others. Of course a poet who blazoned such great names on the tops of his lyrics in his lifetime would make many useful friends, and it is perhaps desirable that he should retain those friends, even though he be now departed to realms where the currying of favour is a matter of no account. But we repeat that it is a pity that Mr. Ezra Pound has not had the pluck to get rid of this tribe of dedicatees. It is notable that of the "uncollected" poems not one is dedicated, though as to three of them which appeared in the Outlook we happen to know that Johnson himself proposed dedications which were refused.

For the rest, nobody can doubt that there is a body of poetry here which is treasurable, and will last because it is sound. Of the things which everybody remembers when Johnson is mentioned we will say nothing. They are too well known to bear quotation. But there are other things not so well known; for instance, the fine lines about Cromwell (dedicated to E. K. Chambers), "A Dream" (dedicated to Edgar Jepson), "The Descant upon the Litany of Loretto," and lyrics in dozens, such as "Counsel,"
"Visions," "The Petition," and "The Sleep of Will," which we should desire to praise. The poems as a whole have the fervour and ecstasy which make for the highest, and though they are frequently marred by fearful drops and failures to get the breath as it were, we must be thankful for them, and continue to delight ourselves with them, and pray for the day when there will be no more dedications, not to say no more Oxford. Johnson could have lived out of his own spirit, and without the assistance of his troops of admiring friends, and it is out of his own spirit, and out of nothing else, that he must ultimately live.

To turn from Lionel Johnson to Mr. James Oppenheim is like walking out of a sanctuary into the full blast of battle. While Johnson deals with the fair worlds which ought to be, Mr. Oppenheim drags us by the scruff of the neck into the hard, undaunted world which is. We consider that it is greatly to the credit of Mr. Grant Richards that he should bestow this strenuous American poet upon the British literary public. At the present moment we are understood to be in the midst of a revival of poetry, but Mr. Richards knows as well as we know, exactly what that "revival" means—that is to say, if it mean anything at all. For it means, really, that the old unhappy coteries are being revived and not poetry. It is an affair of

little admiration societies for little masters who come to you with sugar plums in their hands, saying, "These are the best: do try one." And all the virgins of Bayswater "try one," and are even prevailed upon to "try another," and they echo as one virgin, "These are indeed the best." The Lady of Shalott was half sick of shadows, and it will be a good thing for the the world when it grows sick of sugar plums.

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Now, Mr. Oppenheim has no boxes of chocolate about him. What he has to offer is homely, wheaten bread and cheese of a certain hardness, the which, however, are proper sustenance for proper men. Further, he does not rhyme, and it is precisely here that the fat will be in the fire. A friend of Mr. Oppenheim has invented a term which he tells us "exactly describes the form of these songs." It is a term which was needed, and will doubtless pass into the currency. Up to now poetry without rhymes and of irregular prosodaical construction has always been dismissed for "Whitmanesque." Somebody described Whitman's own verses as "barbaric yawpings." Mr. Oppenheim's friend would have called them "polyrhythmical poetry," and with that phrase we shall be content, as their author is content, to label the present new songs. A poet who expresses himself polyrhythmically and rhymelessly is an easy victim for the criticasters. It is the simplest thing in the world to say of him that he doesn't rhyme because he can't, and that his work is "formless," because he lacks the strength which form demands. We do not propose to make an attack upon the poetical conventions, particularly as we consider them to be almost as essential to poetry as inspiration. Indeed, up to a point they constitute of themselves a sort of inspiration, and while rhyme and metre are a burden to the inept they are wings to the authentic. At the same time, every poet of parts knows in his heart that there are things which, though of their essence part and parcel of poetry, are yet incapable of being expressed within the limits of convention. Of course we shall be told that this is heresy, but our answer is that the greatest poem in the world, namely, the Bible, is a polyrhythmical, rhymeless poem and nothing less, and it is obvious that the poetry of the Bible could not have been set forward in any other terms than its own. The which terms are palpably outside the conventions we have been taught to associate with the rough idea of poetry.

We do not say that Mr. Oppenheim is the evangel of a new gospel, or that he has managed to get into his "Songs for the New Age" any ponderable body of new thought or motive. But the fact about him is that he has courage, and that he is trying; and that his trying is not in any sense a failure. passages or odd lines from work of this particular character would not be fair to the author. Each of his songs is a piece to itself, and the whole of it must be taken or nothing. The following is an average example:-

Push off the clinging arms!
There is only death in this strangle-hold; even if we call it love . .

The mother who cares too much for her child, Or the husband for his wife, They are keeping sheltered and confined what should be free and hardy, toughened for battle!

Nay there is no real love in this binding: It is more often a sense of waste and futility, And a fierce bickering and quarrelling . .

Shake free! Know love in freedom: know love in separation:

Give the soul its own self to support it, and take off your arms! Do honour to the divinity of another human being

By trusting its power to go alone.

It is plain that herein we have nothing specially novel. That "white hands cling to the bridle-rein," Mr. Kiphas told us, and before Mr. Kipling there was Lovelace, who said: -

I could not love thee dear so much Loved I not honour more.

and there were poets of the same view before Lovelace. But we may very well note that in the expression of ideas the world advances. Lovelace was advancing on the elder poets when he rhymed the love of honour into a better thing than love, and Mr. Kipling pushed the idea that the consideration of women is not everything even further; though he does it only by hint or innuendo. And now we have Mr. Oppenheim saying. flatly:-

Push off the clinging arms!

There is only death in this strangle-hold; even if we call it love.

And not only so, but he elaborates the issues and takes them to their logical conclusions. Conventionally we may not agree with these conclusions. We may argue that they have nothing to do with poetry, and it may certainly be argued with reason that Mr. Oppenheim's language is not the language of the familiar children of Appollo. But he is trying to say something which the human heart has been trying to say for itself for a long time, and we submit that he does not fail. We say also that if this poem lacks the colour and the emblazonry we are accustomed to demand from brave poetry, it nevertheless has brave breath in it; and the fact that it is rough and unadorned does not rob it of its heartening quality. There are pretty well a hundred of these new songs, and they are without exception of an even standard and quality, the weak performance, by which the average innovator puts himself out of court, being in the present case altogether absent. We congratulate Mr. Grant Richards on his poet, and though it seems to us highly probable that "Songs for the New Age" will come in for a good share of the neglect which the Fates have apportioned for merit, we consider it well that they should be printed, and are of opinion that they have distinct value, not only by virtue of their subject-matter, but also in their general relation to poetry.

NARCISSUS IN CONNECTICUT.

Vanishing Roads. By RICHARD LE GALLIENNE. (Putnam.) 6s. net.

The cultivated Englishman in thinking of the United States is inclined to be unfavourably impressed. by a country which is apparently materialistic, pluto-cratic, and without good literature. The old aristocracy of the South vaguely appeals to him, but the

modern hustling, dollar-worshipping, slangy Yankee of his idea is anathema. And really there must be something amiss with a nation which produces Mrs. Eddy, Billy Sunday, and their like, but not one great poet or man of letters. Small wonder, then, that we cannot but conclude that, whatever the future may have in store for America, it is at present far from being so great as its people imagine, or in any sense ideal, and it is with a feeling of surprise that we find the author of English Poems speaking of it as his spiritual home as well as "the last resting-place of his household gods." Nor is this blague on his part. Mr. le Gallienne has evidently a real love for the land of his adoption, and we are again surprised after reading this book of essays that his prose has been so little affected by his environment and that indeed it has, if anything, improved since days when yellow was the wear and Euterpe queened it in Vigo Street. It has, it is true, still something of the old Eve, the old flavour of Golden Girl, admired rather of feminine than of masculine youth; but there is no getting away from the fact that its author has developed a real sense of beauty in place of the mere prettiness of old, and if America has anything to do with this change, then America is to be congratulated, though we strongly suspect not Environment but Time as the chief influence. Perhaps Mr. le Gallienne will give us an essay in explanation of the mystery. As it is he continues to write of "the adventures of his soul in the midst of masterpieces"and America-rather than of America itself. would, of course, sooner have him write in this wise, but a picture of America as it appears to him, though not exactly "a subject made to his hand," would undoubtedly help to clear up much misunderstanding. We want to be friends, but the eagle of our dreams is as unprepossessing a bird as that of the gentleman-Nietzsche, to wit-who is mainly responsible for modern Kultur.

How very good are these essays and how refreshing their literary quality! In a country which spends five millions of pounds a day on war and some three pounds on its Civil List we shall not have the Defence of the Realm Act about us, we hope, for confessing to a certain ennui in respect of dispatches " from our own We prefer Mr. le Gallienne correspondent." Nor is this calumny in the manner of Mr. Frank Harris. We yield to no one in our love of England, but our faith is in its people, not in its rulers. There will yet come a day when men of letters are held in greater esteem than lawyer-politicians, and are not driven to despair and suicide.

SHORTER NOTICES.

Studi sul Romanticismo Inglese, di FEDERICO OLIVERO, Libero Docente di Letteratura Inglese nella R. Università di Torino. (Bari: Gius. Laterza & Figli.)

Foreigners have been giving us some admirable books on English literature, and this volume from Italy is something to give thanks for. Professor Olivero is an idealist, with a well-reasoned yet eloquent manner, warm, appreciative and discerning. He throws his net wide enough to catch Poe, Yeats, George Moore, Fiona

Macleod, and "A" among "English" romanticists (which is rather a curious comment on the Irish renaissance); besides these he deals chiefly with Blake, Dowson, and Thompson. From such a choice we learn that his preference is for the symbolistic aspect of the romantic; he seeks ever for the ideal, the inner significance. Thus, while highly estimating the beauties of Moore's style, he notes that his conception of life does "not adapt itself to large visions of humanity"—that his work is, in fact, "a tissue of sensations." No juster criticism was ever made. Yeats, in spite of "the general pallor of his colouring," gives sometimes the glow of a magic splendour, a sumptuousness of bright jewels, which recall Swinburne and the richness of Mallarme's "faery gardens." In Thompson he finds fidelity to ideal forms, not to the merely perceptive. Space prevents further quotation, but the book is a delight from cover to cover; it is a perfect welding of subject and handling, by one whose heart is in what he writes and whose own style is full of calm beauty. Outside the authors with whom he specially deals, Professor Olivero makes many references to Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley, Tennyson, Patmore, to say nothing of Continental writers, which prove that his literary tastes are catholic and his knowledge extensive. The work, of course, is a series of studies, chiefly among recent writers, and does not pretend in any sense to be a history of English romanticism; its aim has achieved a rich fulfilment.

With the Turkish Army in the Crimea and Asia Minor. By T. BUZZARD, M.D. (Murray.) 10s. 6d. net.

This account of an English doctor's work with the Turkish Army during the Crimean War makes very restful reading after the confusion of mind into which we are thrown by attempts to grasp what is going on Dr. Buzzard tells modestly and in our own day. simply a story which is certainly no story of wild adventure, but none the less interesting for being just a quiet narrative of facts and impressions. Under his mellow pen "old unhappy far-off things and battles long ago" are seen, as it were, in repose. And for this, in these sensational times, we may be thankful. If we are reminded of modern fever and fret at all it is when the worthy doctor tells us of the indignation aroused in England by the blunderings of authority and the harrowing revelations of the sufferings of the troops in that first dreadful winter of the war.

"The Press," he says, "with a striking unanimity, denounced in unmeasured terms a military system not unnaturally held responsible for calamities which the country, unfamiliar with such experience after a prolonged period of peace, ascribed to quite unprecedented dereliction of duty on the part of officials. Unable to allot the relative degree of blame in any particular quarter, the newspapers were filled with letters which not infrequently had for their heading, 'Whom Shall We Hang?'" Hang?

Nobody was hanged, of course. In this country nobody ever is hanged for incompetence, which perhaps is just as well. As a nation we are severely critical of the Government, but we trust it in times of peril, in our hearts believing it will pull us through. Government, however, will have a rude awakening which, trading upon our readiness to forgive mistakes, encroaches too far upon our liberties.

Interesting, again, in the light of modern restrictions upon the war correspondent, is the following picture of the famous W. H. Russell among the staff officers at the final assault upon Sebastopol:—

"Russell, in a dark blue uniform and staff cap, besides wearing large goggles to protect his eyes, was provided with strong field-glasses, with which he was surveying the scene, and was usually surrounded by those anxious to gather his impressions of the course of the drama which was being enacted before us."

Dr. Buzzard has the ripeness and kindliness of spirit which come with age, and we hope he will live long enough and have health and strength enough to give us another book of his experiences.

Form and Colour. By L. MARCH PHILLIPPS. (Duckworth.) 7s. 6d. net.

Commencing with the theory that "Form has dominated art whenever and wherever the intellectual faculty was dominant in life; colour has dominated art whenever and wherever the emotional faculty has dominated life," Mr. Phillipps has written a book to show that colour and emotion are derived from the East, whereas the West is responsible for intellect and form. Writers who have dealt with æsthetics from a polemical or historical point of view are usually enthusiastic over one period and desirous of merely fitting previous and subsequent periods into the theories upon which their special predilections are based. Not so with Mr. Phillipps. He writes about all periods with a detachment which we are sure he himself would recognise as characteristic of the Western intellectual method. But he is apt to sacrifice lucidity to overexplanation, and we would suggest to him that the practice of referring readers to his own previous writings is liable to become tedious. A good thing will bear repetition without recriminations. With the conclusions of the book, however, we have no fault to find. That the Middle Ages are in evidence to prove that Christianity alone can reconcile the otherwise antagonistic aspirations of East and West is a fact which cannot be urged too strongly. Since Mr. Phillipps treats the Middle Ages in his detached manner and is inclined to speak of Christianity as an interesting movement useful enough to illustrate his theory, he looks to the future for a realisation of the proper fusing of intellect and emotion in art. We do not think that this is likely to happen without a more popular appreciation of the Middle Ages and a wider cceptance of its spirit. We do not know what Mr. Phillipps means by his remark that "a development more emotional and spiritual in modern thought is declaring itself." Phrases of that kind bear an unfortunate familiarity in these days as coming from followers of William James or from those people who magine that it is of great spiritual importance for Mr. egbie, Mr. Bottomley, and the Reverend Mr. Campbell to be writing in the Sunday papers.

Birds and Man. By W. H. HUDSON. (Duckworth.) 6s.

Mr. Hudson is one of those rare and happy writers who have a deep knowledge of a subject and who do not worry us with pedantry. "I recall the case of Cuvier," he says, " who was always affected to tears by some common yellow flower, the name of which I have forgotten." A more meticulous but less agreeable person would have gone to the British Museum to refresh his memory, and we should have been really none the wiser. "No doubt Ruskin is, before everything, an artist," he says again. "He looks at nature and all visible things with a purpose, which I am hap-pily without; and the reflex effect of his purpose is to make nature to him what it can never appear to me, a painted canvas." Although the writing of books is obviously a part of the purpose of Mr. Hudson's appreciation of nature, it is a part which he hides with skill when he comes to write them. There is nothing "literary" about his work. Whether he is talking of the interesting speculations arising from the songs of birds or the colour of flowers, or of his hatred of gardens or stuffed and caged birds, he remains always an accomplished causeur. His chapters on geese and owls are particularly delightful. So proper an appreciation of Wells and its surroundings would in itself be sufficient to secure our recommendation.

The Life of Lord Bolingbroke. By ARTHUR HASSALL. (Oxford, Blackwell.) 3s. 6d.

Mr. Hassall is too modest in regard to the age in which he writes. "It is impossible to hope," he says, "that the time has yet come when either Bolingbroke's statesmanship or his own character can be judged impartially." We should not have thought that our own time is so lacking in the impartiality he desires. We have not observed any reluctance to pass kindly judgments on political adventurers and debauchees, nor have we observed any lack of readiness in accepting the sort of apology which Mr. Hassall offers for the man who was described by Dr. Johnson in a famous utterance as "a scoundrel and a coward." Of Johnson's opinion, as well as those of others, Mr. Hassall remarks:—

"These views quoted above, merely show the extent to which calumny, vindictiveness and malice will pursue the memory of an illustrious statesman. His faults are patent enough, but so are his virtues. He must have been a delightful companion.

This is a line of argument with which this age is very familiar. In a chapter in which Mr. Hassall acknowledges the valuable assistance of the Dean of Christ Church we find:—

"The philosophical and religious opinions of Lord Bolingbroke are now of comparatively little importance either in the history of philosophy or theology or in the life of their author."

We are in agreement with the first portion of this statement, and merely note that later on Mr. Hassall, without the assistance of this very reverend gentleman, quotes with approval the remark of Lord Morley: "It is not too much to say that Bolingbroke was the direct progenitor of Voltaire's opinions in religion." But we are not prepared to accept on the word of all the Deans in the Kingdom a statement to the effect that the per-

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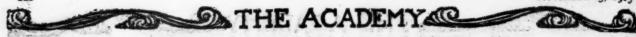
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sonal principles of a Deist and a Rationalist had no bearing on the career of one of the leading and most brilliant figures in an age of scoundrelism and corruption. We are not surprised that Mr. Hassall should accept, paraphrase, and then quote the opinion of a man like Bolingbroke as to the personal character of James Edward Stuart. Praise for a man who, Mr. Hassall is forced to admit-

"To his infinite credit declared in March, 1714 in very explicit and straightforward language that under no circumstances would he surrender his religious beliefs, or pretend to change his religion for the sake

can have but small place in a book in praise of Lord Bolingbroke. Our quotations have indicated sufficiently the tone and temper in which this little apologia for scoundrelism has been written, and we do not think we need say more.

The A. B. C. of Heraldry. By GUY CADOGAN ROTHERY. (Stanley Paul.) 5s. net.

Apart from the fact that this volume contains nearly four hundred pages, with thirteen illustrations in colour, and three hundred and fourteen in half tone and line, there can be no doubt that it constitutes by far and away the best handbook of heraldry which has hitherto seen the light. The author displays an astonishing knowledge of his subject, particularly in its historical and artistic aspects, nor has he lost sight of the romance with which heraldry abounds, the result being that the book can be read with interest. even though the reader be not specially bent on acquiring information. The illustrations, whether in colour, half tone or line, are very fine indeed, and as the book is large crown octavo in size, and strongly bound in cloth, one is apt to wonder how the publishers are able to sell it as so low a price as 5s. net. We have seen many a half guinea book which was neither so well got up nor so entertaining.

The Earle Collection of Early Staffordshire Pottery. By MAJOR CYRIL EARLE, T.D. (Brown.) 25s. net.

We can easily imagine this very handsome volume being sought after not only by collectors of pottery. Major Cyril Earle must have laboured at it lovingly, and all concerned with it are to be congratulated upon so magnificent a production. Containing as it does upwards of two hundred and seventy half-tone reproductions and ten full-page plates in colour, together with an informing text, it will interest many persons without expert knowledge of its subject. We ourselves shall treasure it, if only for the illustrations (pp. 143-151) of quaint Toby jugs. It is the sort of book to set a poor reviewer pitying rich people who don't know what to do with their money. Let them collect Toby jugs and be happy!

Messrs. Sedgwick and Jackson have published in pamphlet form five sonnets by Rupert Brooke. There can be no doubt that, taken together, these sonnets constitute the most convincing utterance about the war which has been offered us. The pity of it is that Brooke did not live to write further moving pieces,

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